1998/1999 Annual Report

BRITISH COLUMBIA
Ministry for Children and Families

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1998/1999 Annual Report

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BRITISH COLUMBIA Ministry for Children and Families

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Letters of Transmittal

To the Honourable
Garde B. Gardom
Lieutenant Governor
Province of British Columbia

May It Please Your Honour:

I have the honour of submitting to you the Annual Report of the Ministry for Children and Families for 1998/99.

This report outlines the ministry's activities from April 1, 1998 to March 31, 1999 and is an accurate account of achievements during that time.

Gretchen M. Brewin
Minister

To the Honourable
Gretchen M. Brewin
Minister

Dear Minister:

I have the honour to present the Annual Report of the Ministry for Children and Families, which details the ministry's activities from April 1, 1998 to March 31, 1999.

Mike Corbeil
Deputy Minister

OUR MISSION The Ministry [illegible] people of British Columbia by ensuring a child-centered [illegible] and protects the healthy development of children and youth while recognizing their [illegible] commitment to family and community. Communities and clients must be an integral part of the work of this Ministry. Quality assurance, accountability and openness are fundamental to its [illegible]

Message from the Minister

I am pleased to present the annual report for the Ministry for Children and Families for 1998/99.

During the year, under the direction of my predecessor, the Honourable Lois Boone, the ministry continued working with service partners throughout the province to support and nurture children and families, and to promote safer, healthier communities. The ministry continues to build on its past successes in many ways, including through the ministry's preventive, promotional and early intervention programs.

I am confident that the ministry's growing successes will continue to benefit many children and families throughout the province.

Examples of the ministry's progress in 1998/99 include:

- a $4.8 million expansion of services for youth at risk, stronger child protection legislation, allowing social workers to supervise children's care without removing them from their families
- production of public education materials to help reduce the incidence of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
- creation of an Aboriginal Child and Family Service Strategy, and
- expansion of the 10 initial Building Blocks initiatives to include 27 sites.

These are significant accomplishments for a new ministry – one whose integrated structure and breadth of services are unique in North America. This progress would not have been possible without the ministry's many dedicated staff and community partners' commitment to safeguarding and supporting the children and families of British Columbia.

Gretchen M. Brewin
Minister

Message from the Deputy Minister

The 1998/99 fiscal year was the ministry's second full year of operations, and one in which we made considerable improvements to our service delivery structure.

We continued to streamline administrative functions, moving from 20 to 11 service regions and further reducing administrative costs while maintaining geographic consistency with regional health authorities and school districts.

We also established 15 key priorities to inform and enhance program and service delivery, based on extensive consultation with our stakeholders. These priorities are summarized on page 10 of this annual report.

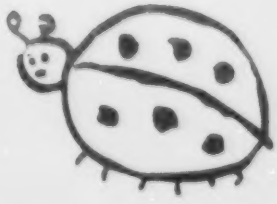
Other examples of our achievements in 1998/99 include:

- conducting two national child protection worker recruitment campaigns to fill ongoing vacancies as well as 250 new child welfare positions
- establishing the Contract Reform Team and Contract Management Working Group
- actively promoting government-wide equity and diversity strategies
- consulting with representatives of the lower mainland's Chinese community, as part of a commitment to improve communication with, and services to, multi-cultural communities, and
- facilitating the creation of the ministry's regional emergency operations centres through training, consultation and provision of models for regional emergency planners.

These accomplishments would not have been possible without our staff and partners throughout the province. These dedicated professionals are pivotal to our commitment to work efficiently and effectively.

Looking ahead, I am confident that in 1999/00 the ministry will continue to make progress in providing a broad variety of high-quality programs to children and families across British Columbia.

Mike Corbeil
Deputy Minister



Ministry Overview

MISSION

The Ministry for Children and Families serves the people of British Columbia by ensuring a child-centered, integrated approach that promotes and protects the healthy development of children and youth while recognizing their lifelong attachment to family and community. Communities and clients must be an integral part of the work of this ministry. Quality assurance, accountability and openness are fundamental to its success.

LEGISLATION

The ministry has a statutory mandate to deliver services under the following legislation:

- *Adoption Act*
- *Child, Family and Community Service Act*
- *Human Resource Facility Act*
- *Social Worker Act*
- *Correction Act (Youth)*
- *B.C. Benefits (Child Care) Act*

Other services may be provided as determined by government.

ORGANIZATION

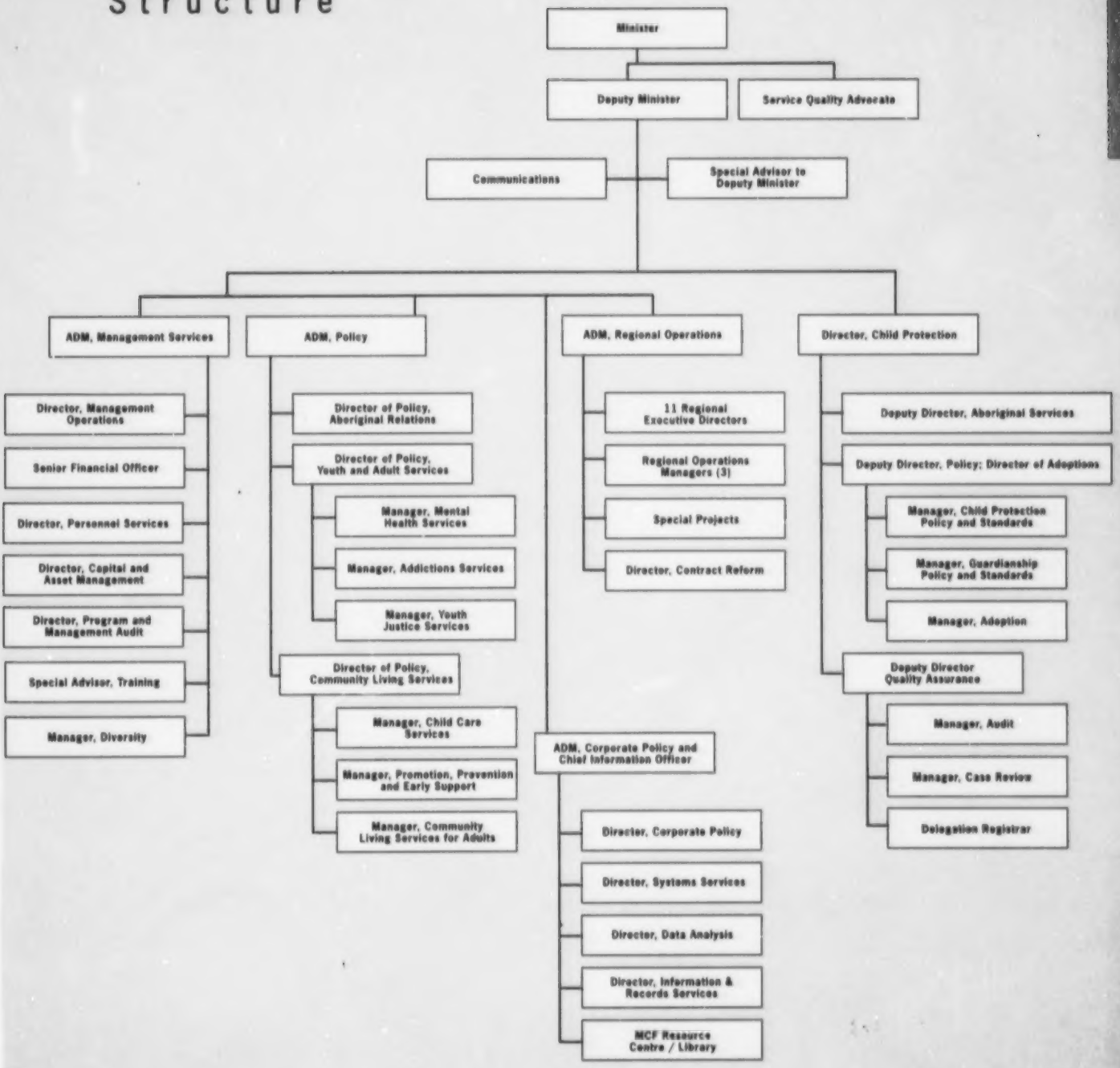
The ministry has two distinct but interrelated components: headquarters, which sets policy and oversees all ministry operations; and 11 regions[1], which directly serve the public from offices located throughout the province.

A Regional Executive Director heads each region which manages community services, child protection, community living, contract management, quality assurance, Aboriginal services, finance and personnel.

At headquarters, a range of corporate services support program delivery on a ministry-wide basis.

[1]Kootenays, Okanagan, Thompson/Cariboo, Upper Fraser, South Fraser, Simon Fraser/Burnaby, Coast/North Shore, Central/Upper Island, North, Vancouver/Richmond, Capital

Executive/ Management Structure



Total Expenditures

FISCAL YEAR ENDING
MARCH 31, 1999*

	Total Expenditure $ Million
Minister's Office	$ 0.448
Corporate Services	54.958
Program Management	241.157
School Based Programs	45.213
Public Health Services	72.549
Children and Family Support	127.734
Services to Special Needs	65.273
Adoption Program	3.064
Youth Forensic Programs	10.970
Youth Justice Programs	37.362
Healthy Kids	11.898
Miscellaneous Grants	4.999
Children in Care	217.005
Special Needs Child Care	27.690
Child Care Administration	7.347
Other Child Care Programs	26.269
Child Care Subsidies	120.643
Willow Clinic	3.908
Residential Services	254.408
Training and Support	102.155
Alcohol and Drug Services	41.621
Total Expenditures for Ministry for Children and Families *	$ 1476.671

* *Expenditures are net of recoveries*

"Imagination will often carry us to worlds that never were. But without it, we go nowhere."
Carl Sagan

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MINISTRY PRIORITIES AS OF MARCH 1999

As part of its response to the Contract and Program Restructuring Review, the ministry established 15 key priorities. These priorities guide ministry activity and policy development, and help ensure that everyone from clients to staff to community partners shares a common vision on the ministry's work and direction. The priorities, along with related activities, are presented in detail on the ministry's Web site (www.mcf.gov.bc.ca) where they are updated regularly; a summary follows:

PRIORITY	DESCRIPTION	EXECUTIVE SPONSOR	SEE PAGE(S)
Consultation Framework	Develop a framework for providing information and advice to, and receiving feedback from, those involved in or affected by ministry service delivery.	Special Advisor to Deputy Minister	50 – Deputy Minister's Office (Special Advisor to the Deputy Minister)
Integrated Service Delivery System	Define and organize components of a seamless service delivery system.	Special Advisor to Deputy Minister	50 – Deputy Minister's Office; all program areas
Promotion, Prevention and Early Support	Provide direction and develop activities to build, maintain or enhance the healthy functioning of families and avoid later, more expensive interventions.	Assistant Deputy Minister, Policy	24-25 and 28 – Developmental & Support Services for Children & Youth with Special Needs; Public Health; Child Care
Children and Youth with Special Needs	Develop sustainable services and supports to meet the individual needs of children and youth with special needs, in the context of the ministry's overall priority for promotion, prevention and early support.	Assistant Deputy Minister, Policy	24 – Developmental & Support Services for Children & Youth with Special Needs; Regional Operations Division – 36
Youth Strategy	Develop a policy framework to address urgent issues for youth while supporting the development of a high-quality system of promotion, prevention, early support and intervention for youth.	Assistant Deputy Minister, Policy	29 and 31 – Mental Health Youth Justice
Addictions	Define a policy framework to guide the ministry's approach to prevention and treatment of substance abuse issues for adults, youth and families.	Assistant Deputy Minister, Policy	34 – Addiction Services

PRIORITY	DESCRIPTION	EXECUTIVE SPONSOR	SEE PAGE(S)
Child Protection	Develop and support a child protection program that meets or exceeds national child protection standards and responds to community needs.	Director, Child Protection	12-14 and 17 – Child Protection Services and Division; Child Protection Policy and Standards; Quality Assurance
Foster Care	Build, maintain and enhance the capacity and quality of the foster family program.	Director, Child Protection	14 – Guardianship Policy and Standards
Children in Care	Provide regional services to ensure the ministry's guardianship responsibilities are adequately fulfilled. Develop a policy and practice framework to enhance the capacity and quality of adoption services provided by both MCF and licensed adoption agencies.	Director, Child Protection	12-14 – Guardianship; Adoption; Regional Operations Division – 36
Aboriginal Strategy	Develop and implement a plan to build the capacity of Aboriginal groups to assume responsibility for child, youth and family services, including child welfare services.	Assistant Deputy Minister, Policy; Director, Child Protection	16 and 35 – Aboriginal Services; Aboriginal Relations
****Renewing and Sustaining Community Living Services***	Work with people in the community living sector to ensure the provision of services can be sustained within current allocations.	Special Advisor to the Deputy Minister; Assistant Deputy Minister, Policy	32 and 36 – Community Living Services; Regional Operations Division
Resource Management	Articulate direction on how ministry resources will be used.	Assistant Deputy Minister, Management Services	43 – Management Services Division
Contract Reform	Provide direction and support for implementing consistent contracting practices throughout the province.	Assistant Deputy Minister, Regional Operations	37 – Contract Reform Team
Information Management	Articulate and implement a plan for managing the ministry's information resources, including data and tools.	Assistant Deputy Minister of Corporate Policy and Chief Information Officer	39 – Corporate Policy and Chief Information Officer Division
Accountability	Ensure the ministry assesses its programs and services, and holds people accountable for delivering programs and services.	Assistant Deputy Minister, Management Services	48 – Program & Management Audit

*The wording and intent of this priority are currently under discussion with the community living sub-sector table.

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Child Protection Division

CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES

The *Child, Family and Community Service Act (CF&CS Act)* is the legislative authority for the ministry's Child Protection Services. Under the Act, the Minister designates the Director of Child Protection who, in turn, delegates authority to child protection workers province-wide.

FAST FACTS FOR 1998/99

- OF NEARLY 1 MILLION CHILDREN IN B.C. AGED UNDER 19, ON AVERAGE FEWER THAN 1% WERE IN CARE OVER THE YEAR

Under the *CF&CS Act*, anyone with reason to believe that a child may be abused or neglected, or may need protection for any other reason, must report it to the Director or a delegated child protection worker. Child protection workers investigate these reports and take the most appropriate, least disruptive action to protect the child's safety and well-being.

These actions may include:

- providing or arranging support services for the family
- supervising the child's care in the home, or
- protecting the child by placing him or her with relatives, a foster family or specialized residential treatment resources.

The Director also delegates authority to child protection workers to approve foster homes for children who come into ministry care. Resources such as group homes, specialized residential facilities, assessment resources and respite resources are also available for children and youth in care.

Child welfare services (child protection, guardianship and adoption services) are provided province-wide through approximately 200 ministry offices in 11 regions. Fourteen Aboriginal child and family service agencies deliver delegated child welfare services to 89 Bands. The provincial Child Protection Division supports ministry and Aboriginal agency staff.

CHILD PROTECTION DIVISION

The Child Protection Division develops policies, standards and programs, and ensures the overall quality of adoption, child protection and guardianship services under the *Adoption Act* and the *CF&CS Act*.

The division is also responsible for helping build the capacity of Aboriginal agencies delegated to deliver services under the *CF&CS Act* and for ensuring the quality of those services.

To meet these responsibilities, the division has five branches or work teams: Child Protection Policy and Standards, Guardianship Policy and Standards, Adoption Services, Aboriginal Services and Quality Assurance.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND STANDARDS

The Child Protection Policy and Standards Branch is responsible for:

- developing policy and standards for child protection services
- supporting child protection practice
- enhancing the medical assessment of child abuse and neglect

- developing, implementing and evaluating the B.C. Risk Assessment Model, and
- developing and coordinating the ministry's Child Protection Consultation Program.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- Proclaimed amendments to the *CF&CS Act* to further strengthen child protection services, the most notable of which allows social workers to apply for a court order to supervise children's care, *without* having to remove them from their families.
- Developed a Case Annotated Version of the *CF&CS Act*, summarizing significant court precedents to help judges, lawyers, social workers, and policy analysts stay up-to-date on legal issues relevant to child protection practice.
- Developed a brochure advising extended family members of their significant role in child protection.
- Consulted with parents, youth, service providers and others to help determine whether B.C. should consider developing secure or non-voluntary services for children and youth involved in high-risk activities such as substance abuse and prostitution.
- Began developing child protection protocols to help the ministry work in closer partnership with provincial agencies, bodies and ministries serving children and families.
- Expanded funding and professional support for medical assessment and treatment of child abuse and neglect, by establishing two additional Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect (SCAN) units in partnership with the Capital Health Region and health regions in the Fraser Valley.
- Continued support to the Child Protection Service Unit at B.C.'s Children's Hospital, which provides medical assessment for children concerning physical and sexual abuse and neglect.
- Signed an information-sharing protocol with the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC) permitting After Hours child welfare staff to search ICBC's database to obtain a person's name and/or address from their license number if there is a child protection concern involving the individual.
- Developed inter-provincial/territorial child welfare protocols on sharing information and providing services to children and families who move between provinces/territories.

FUTURE WORK

The branch's future work includes:

- establishing a SCAN centre in the B.C. Interior
- implementing a new case documentation system, and
- concluding research and consultation to determine if B.C. should develop secure care.

GUARDIANSHIP POLICY AND STANDARDS

Under the *CF&CS Act*, children may come into the Director's care if they need protection, or on a voluntary basis if their families need support. While a child is in care, the ministry is responsible for meeting all their needs and does so through a range of services such as foster and group homes and specialized resources.

The branch sets policy and standards for residential services for children and youth in care, including foster homes and specialized resources, and for practice by ministry staff delegated to carry out guardianship responsibilities.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- Adapted, tested and evaluated the internationally recognized *Looking After Children* (LAC) program for use in B.C. LAC uses a child-centred approach to help assess needs and achieve better outcomes for children and youth in care.
- Implemented mandatory standards for foster homes, in partnership with the B.C. Federation of Foster Parent Associations (BCFFPA).
- Implemented mandatory standards for staffed children's residential services in partnership with the Federation of Child and Family Services.
- Launched a successful campaign to recruit more foster families in conjunction with Communications and the BCFFPA. The campaign emphasized the need for more multicultural and Aboriginal foster families, and for families able to care for children with extra special needs.

FUTURE WORK

The branch's future work includes:

- developing practice standards for guardianship
- designing a new guardianship service delivery model to ensure that each child in care receives focused, integrated planning and care
- developing protocols for foster homes in partnership with the BCFFPA
- developing a mandatory foster care education program in partnership with the BCFFPA
- operating an after hours support line for foster families.

ADOPTION SERVICES

The *Adoption Act* and regulations govern adoption services. The ministry arranges about half of the legal adoptions in B.C.; licensed adoption agencies complete most of the rest, while relative, step-parent and adult adoptions proceed directly through the courts.

Adoption services are available through any local ministry office or through one of seven licensed adoption agencies in the Prince George, Kelowna, Victoria, Vancouver and lower mainland areas.

The central Adoption Branch provides a range of supports to ministry field offices and the licensed agencies and oversees the operation of several registries, including:

- the Birth Fathers' Registry, which allows a birth father to register his interest and be notified of any adoption plan for his child in B.C.
- the Post-Adoption Openness Registry, which allows families with closed adoptions to register for an openness arrangement, and
- the Adoption Reunion Registry, which offers search and reunion services to adopted adults and their birth families.

The branch also supports adopted people and their families by:

- providing post-adoption assistance for children placed by the ministry who have special needs
- assisting Aboriginal people adopted in B.C. to obtain status under the *Indian Act*, and
- providing services after an adoption order is granted, including assessing records, providing medical information, settling estates, assisting with information needed in child welfare investigations and facilitating contacts for medical needs such as genetic testing.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- Increased adoptions of children in care by providing additional resources for home studies, focusing on existing foster-to-adopt situations, and preparing children to move to adoption.
- Worked with federal authorities to ensure proposed changes to federal legislation continue safeguards for inter-country adoption.
- Placed a total of 115 children in adoptive homes (from a total of 361 children registered for adoption).
- Issued 286 Letters of No Objection to the federal government to support British Columbians adopting from other countries.
- Approved 14 adoptions involving countries that have ratified the *Hague Convention on the Protection of Children*.
- Oversaw 200 adoption placements through the licensed agencies.
- Facilitated 546 exchanges of letters, photos and gifts through the Post-Adoption Mail Exchange Registry.
- Arranged 318 reunions through the Adoption Reunion Registry.

FAST FACTS FOR 1998/99

- MCF made 115 adoption placements
- The Post Adoption Assistance Program served 267 families

FUTURE WORK

The branch's future work includes:

- recruiting more adoptive families for children in ministry care
- increasing support for families who have adopted children with special needs
- completing the development of adoption practice standards and competencies, and
- developing a guide to assist adoptees searching for birth parents.

ABORIGINAL SERVICES

Recognizing the unique history of Aboriginal peoples in British Columbia, the ministry is committed to returning responsibility for Aboriginal child and family services to Aboriginal Nations and communities. The Aboriginal Services Branch supports this objective by encouraging the development of delegation enabling agreements with Aboriginal communities.

The branch helps Aboriginal communities build their capacity to provide child protection services and assists delegated Aboriginal child and family service agencies to meet the requirements of the *CF&CS Act*. It also develops and measures compliance with child protection and readiness criteria standards as delegated Aboriginal agencies assume greater responsibility for children's safety and well-being.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- Created the Aboriginal Child and Family Service Strategy to encourage and support Aboriginal communities to design and deliver services under the *CF&CS Act*.[2]
- Continued supporting the delegation of responsibility to Aboriginal peoples under the CF&CS Act. As of March 31, 1999:
  - six First Nations child and family service agencies provided a full range of child protection services
  - two First Nations agencies provided voluntary care services, foster home development and guardianship services
  - three more agencies provided voluntary services and resource development
  - 120 of the 197 bands in the province were in the delegation process; a Métis group was planning for delegation and one urban-based Aboriginal group was in the pre-planning stage.
- Nearly completed Aboriginal Operational and Practice Standards and Indicators, in partnership with First Nations child and family service agencies and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.
- Continued developing an Aboriginal social worker training program.
- Conducted feasibility planning for a culturally appropriate Aboriginal risk assessment model.
- Approved 19 requests for Aboriginal children in care to be placed for adoption with non-Aboriginal families.
- Began work to establish the Federation of Aboriginal Foster Parents Association, in partnership with the B.C. Federation of Foster Parent Associations.

[2] In addition, Spallumcheen Child Welfare Program delivers full child protection services under a political accord with Indian and Native Affairs Canada. The ministry has a protocol agreement with the Program.

FUTURE WORK

The branch's future work includes:

- completing and implementing Operational Readiness and Practice Standards and Indicators for Aboriginal agencies
- developing an audit and review process for Aboriginal child and family service agencies
- ensuring Aboriginal children in continuing care have culturally appropriate permanency plans, and
- coordinating and supporting the development of a client complaint process for Aboriginal child and family service agencies.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

This branch ensures the ministry's child protection services are consistent with the requirements of the *CF&CS Act*, and with ministry policy and practice standards. This is achieved through three work units: Audit, Case Review and Delegation.

FAST FACTS FOR 1998/99

- 57 OFFICES WERE AUDITED
- 146 NEW CHILD WELFARE WORKERS WERE DELEGATED

AUDIT UNIT

The Audit Unit monitors field practice in ministry offices providing child protection, guardianship and voluntary family support services, to ensure compliance with the *CF&CS Act*, policy and standards. It also monitors service providers' compliance with standards for foster homes and staffed children's residential facilities.

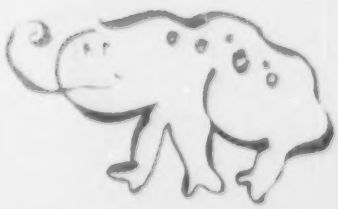
Practice audits review a sample of cases in each office to help ensure the provision of high-quality services; provide a baseline measure of current levels of practice; confirm good practice and recommend improvements where practice needs to be strengthened. All audit recommendations are tracked and monitored regularly.

CASE REVIEW UNIT

As required by the *CF&CS Act*, the Director of Child Protection and the Deputy Director of Quality Assurance conduct case reviews when there are serious incidents, concerns or complaints that suggest the ministry may not have provided adequate services to protect or care for children.

These reviews are managed on a continuum that includes initial and follow-up reports for any serious incident, critical injury or fatality of a child in care or a child known to the ministry in the previous 12 months.

Depending on the outcome of the initial review, a more in-depth Deputy Director's Review may be conducted. If further investigation is needed, the unit may proceed to a Director's Case Review, where case files are examined and staff involved are interviewed. Both Deputy Director's reviews and Director's Case reviews may generate recommendations to improve practice and policies.



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DELEGATION UNIT

The Delegation Unit ensures that child welfare workers are qualified and competent to carry out the duties and functions delegated to them by the Director of Child Protection.

Before they receive delegated authority, all ministry and First Nations child welfare workers must:

- have the required educational qualifications
- complete a specialized pre-employment training course
- complete a period of supervised child protection field practice, and
- achieve a score of at least 80% in a written delegation exam.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

AUDIT UNIT

- Implemented a four-year cycle of practice audits for all ministry offices providing child protection, guardianship and non-protective family services. Approximately 55 offices will be audited each year.
- Began developing an audit tool to measure compliance with foster home and staffed children's residential service standards.
- Audited practice in 57 ministry offices (see following table).

PRACTICE AUDITS – MINISTRY FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

April 1, 1998 - March 31, 1999

• North and South Okanagan	7
• Thompson and Cariboo	4
• South Fraser	12
• Simon Fraser and Burnaby	3
• Central Vancouver Island/ Upper Island/Central Coast	7
• Northern Interior/North West and Peace Liard	15
• Vancouver and Richmond	9
Total number of ministry offices audited	57
Overall provincial compliance for:	
• Child Protection Practice	85%
• Guardianship Practice	82%

CASE REVIEW UNIT

- Conducted 576 case reviews to ensure provision of an adequate standard of service.
- Completed 48 Deputy Director Reviews and 16 Director Case Reviews.
- Of 44 complaints received from the Children's Commission, 29 were resolved without a hearing, one was resolved with a hearing, and 14 were under review at fiscal year end.

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DELEGATION UNIT

- Established a provincial registry to ensure that child welfare workers applying for delegation meet the necessary requirements.

FUTURE WORK

The Audit Unit's future work includes:

- auditing approximately 55 ministry offices per year providing child protection, guardianship and non-protective family services, and
- commencing regular audits of children's residential services and foster homes.

The Case Review Unit's future work includes:

- introducing new protocols for foster homes that clearly define relationships between the ministry and foster parents.

The Delegation Unit's future work includes:

- implementing pre-employment training courses for child welfare workers through community colleges
- developing competencies for delegated workers who provide services to youth under youth agreements
- developing and implementing competencies for adoption, guardianship and senior practitioner job functions
- developing competencies for child protection supervisors, and
- developing and publishing a *Delegation Handbook*.

AFTER HOURS AND THE HELPLINE FOR CHILDREN

To provide round-the-clock response to child protection reports, the ministry operates an After Hours service and a toll-free Helpline for Children that anyone can call to report suspected child abuse or neglect.

The Helpline is located at the Provincial After Hours office in Vancouver. The number, Zenith 1234, will change to 310-1234 in September 2000. There is no charge for the call.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- After Hours responded to 107,764 calls.
- The Helpline for Children received 26,121 of these calls.
- Of all calls to After Hours, 64,606 concerned child welfare and of these, 47,750 required investigation by After Hours staff and/or further action and follow-up by daytime field staff.
- Guardianship services responded to 28,215 calls.
- A total of 7,969 calls were requests for support services.
- 21,344 calls reported children in need of protection.

FUTURE WORK

Future work includes:

- continuing to provide province-wide, 24 hour telephone response to protect and safeguard children.

Child Protection Service Activity

FAST FACTS FOR 1998/99

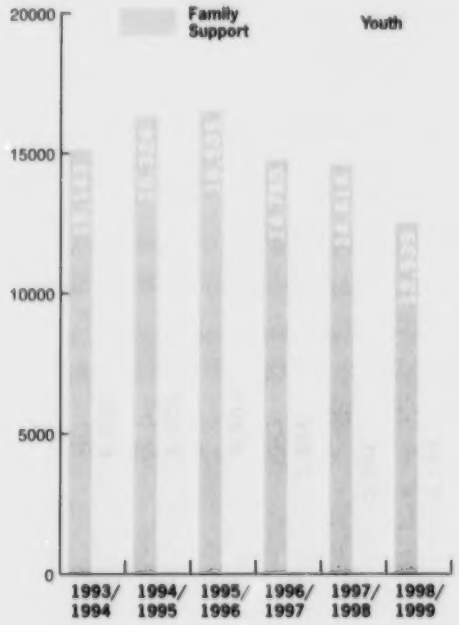
- Infant Development Services assisted 5,100 babies and young children
- 7,000 families received Special Needs Family Support services
- At Home services assisted 2,500 families
- 1,100 families received Behavioural Support for Children with Autism services
- Early Intervention Services assisted 6,000 families
- 4,000 children received School-Age Therapy services

FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES – VOLUNTARY REQUESTS FOR SERVICES

Families who are having difficulties are encouraged to seek help before their problems develop into protection concerns. Many of these requests involve services oriented to youth.

- In 1998/99, the ministry received 17,663 requests – a decrease of 10.2% over the previous year.
- Requests for family support service made up 71% (12,539) of the total while the remaining 29% (5,124) were for services for youth.

VOLUNTARY REQUESTS FOR SERVICES 1993/94 – 1998/99



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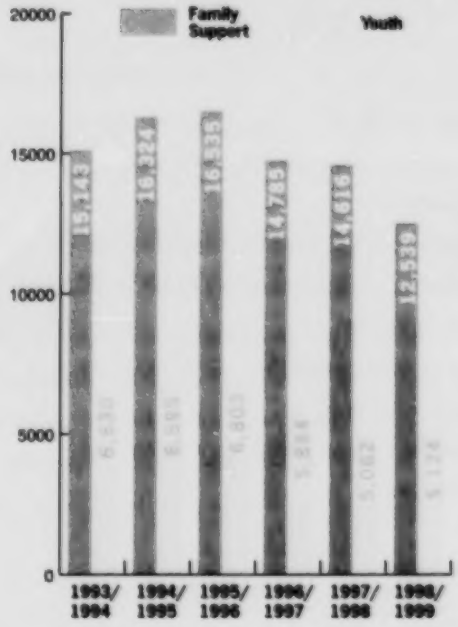

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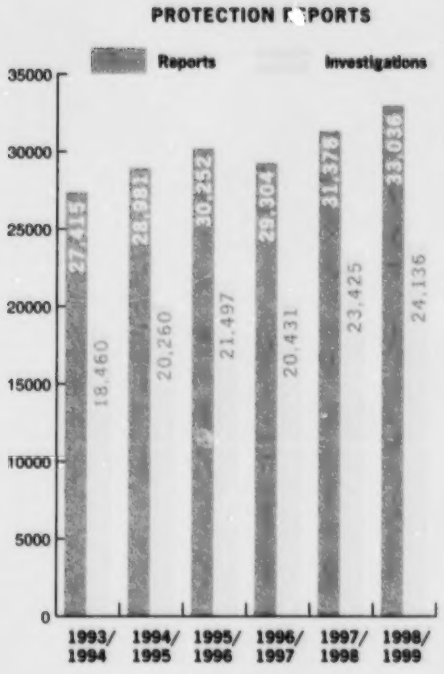
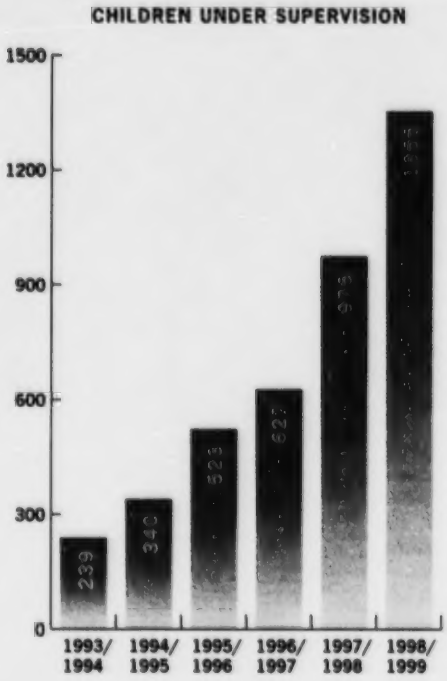
"We worry about what a child will become tomorrow,
yet we forget that they are someone today."
Stacia Tauscher





CHILD PROTECTION – PROTECTION REPORTS

The *Child, Family and Community Service Act* requires everyone who believes that a child may be in need of protection to report their concerns to the ministry. Each report is assessed to determine if a child protection investigation is required

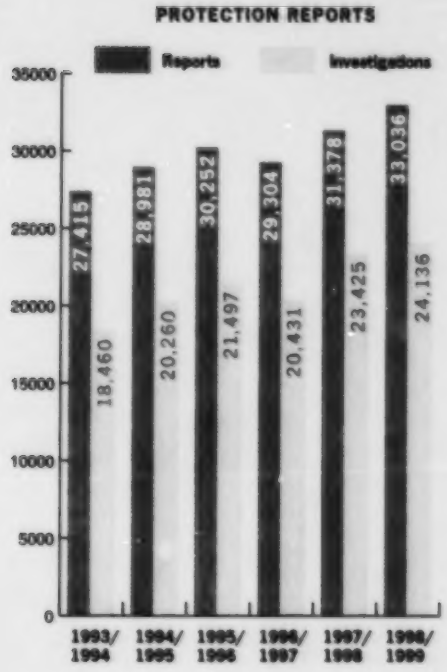
PROTECTION REPORTS

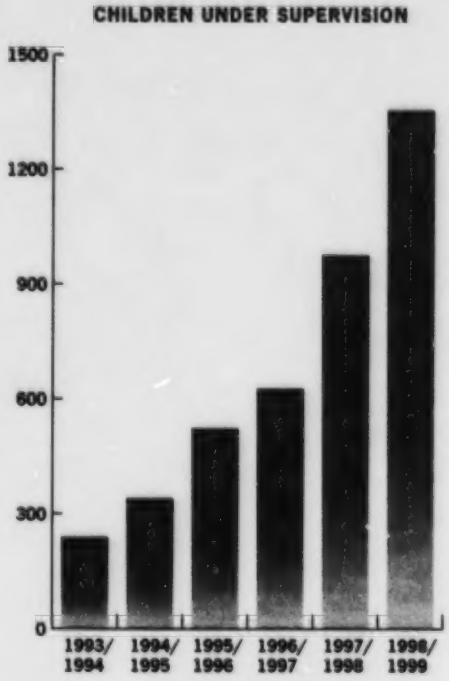
- In 1998/99, the ministry received 33,036 reports about children in need of protection – an increase of 5.3% over the previous year.
- Most calls (56.3%) came from professionals and service providers who were in contact with the family or subject child.
- The subject child, the immediate family and other relatives were the source of 22.3% of calls.
- Concerned citizens, neighbours and friends made 18.2% of calls, while 3.2% were received from anonymous sources.

CHILD PROTECTION – COURT ORDERED SUPERVISION

Court-ordered supervision allows the ministry to protect children in their family homes.

- On March 31, 1999, 1,355 children were under supervision – an increase of 39% over the previous year.
- Of these children, 161 (12%) were under supervision without removal from their families.
- The remainder had been in ministry care and returned home with specific terms and conditions in place to ensure their safety.





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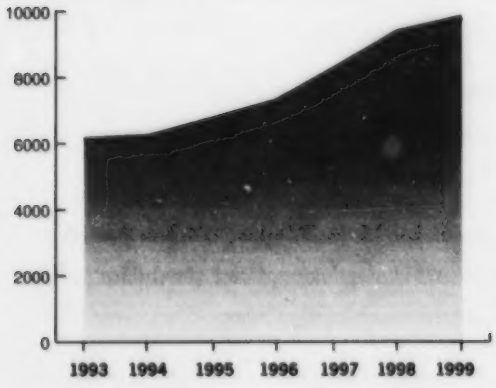
CHILDREN IN CARE – OVERVIEW

The child in care program provides substitute parenting for children who are unable to live with their own families. Due to increased public reporting of child welfare concerns, a corresponding increase in protection investigations, and an increase in the child population*, the number of children in care continued to increase in 1998/99.

- On March 31, 1999 there were 9,813 children in care – an increase of 447 (4.8%) over the previous year.
- Older children (aged 13 – 18) continued to form the largest group in care; 4,532 accounted for 46.2% of the total.
- 2,961 children (30.2%) were of Aboriginal background.

CHILDREN IN CARE
MARCH 1993 – MARCH 1999



*In 1998/99 there were almost 1 million children under age 19 living in British Columbia.

CHILDREN IN CARE – DISCHARGES

Every effort is made to support families and achieve the earliest possible return home for children in care while ensuring their health and safety needs are met.

- During the year:
  - > 38.9% of children leaving care returned home within 3 months
  - > 55.9% returned within 6 months, and
  - > 74.3% returned within one year.
- Some children require longer-term care, often because of special needs that continue into adulthood. Of the children discharged during 1998/99:
  - > 2.5% were in care from five to 10 years
  - > 1% were in care for over 10 years.

Policy Division

DEVELOPMENTAL AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND THEIR FAMILIES

This service area supports children and youth with special needs and their families to optimize their lifetime opportunities. Programs are family-centered and provide parents with as much choice as possible.

Programs and services fall into two categories: developmental and support.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Infant Development – provides home-based services to infants up to age three who have, or are at risk of, developmental delay, and their families.

Supported Child Care – provides consultation, training and extra supports to enable children with special needs to participate in pre-school and child care settings in the community.

Early Intervention – provides a network of services for children and youth with special needs and their families, including physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy and family support.

Behavioural Support for Children with Autism – provides specialized consultation on issues such as child-specific training, behavioural techniques, and behaviour management planning.

Summer Program for the Deaf/Blind – supports deaf/blind students to maintain skills gained during the school year.

School-Aged Therapy Services – provides school-based occupational and physical therapy services to school-aged children with special needs.

SUPPORT SERVICES

The **At Home Program** provides financial support to families caring for children with severe disabilities at home.

Respite services offer families an interval of rest and relief from daily care of children with special needs.

Associate Family services provide a trained family to work in partnership with birth parents to provide care for children with multiple disabilities, in the trained-family home.

Nursing Support provides professional services to support at-home care.

Child and Youth Care Workers support children to learn social and life skills, and/or support families to learn parenting skills.

Homemaker/Home Support Workers provide household management or care for children while parents are temporarily absent.

Parent Support for Families provides a range of community-based services including parent support groups, parent skills training, counselling, life skills and organized activities.

The **Professional Support for Children with Special Needs Program** enhances and supports community integration opportunities for children with special needs and their families.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- Began developing a discussion paper on services for children and youth with special needs and their families.
- Completed a draft of the *Autism Action Plan*, which coordinates the work of the ministries of health, education and children and families.
- Began developing new policy for the Supported Child Care program.
- Developed and delivered training for ministry staff and agencies serving children with special needs.
- Developed a plan to address recommendations from an audit of Infant Development Program services.
- Provided developmental services to approximately 12,000 children and 7,000 families as follows:
  - Infant Development program: approximately 5,100 clients
  - Supported Child Care: approximately 5,600 clients
  - Early Intervention: approximately 6,000 pre-school children
  - Speech and Language Services: approximately 3,500 pre-school children
  - Behavioural Support for Children with Autism: approximately 1,100 clients
  - Summer Program for the Deaf/Blind: 35 clients
  - School-Aged Therapy Services: 4,000 clients.
- Provided support services to approximately 7,000 children and families.

FUTURE WORK

The branch's future work includes:

- starting public consultation and data collection for a policy review of programs and services for children and youth with special needs and developing a draft policy framework
- implementing the Autism Action Plan
- implementing Supported Child Care policy
- implementing recommendations from the Infant Development Program Audit Report
- reviewing the Nursing Support Services Program, and
- reviewing the At Home Medical Benefits Program.

PROMOTION, PREVENTION AND EARLY SUPPORT SERVICES

This section determines policy direction for promotion, prevention and early support activities and is guided by the *School Act*, the *Health Act*, the *CF & CS Act*, the *Supply Act*, and the *Hearing Aid Act*.

Promotion, prevention and early support programs and services are described below.

Family Support Services help families become stronger and meet their children's needs by acquiring skills, achieving specific goals and addressing factors that affect their capacity to parent. Services include prenatal outreach, parenting support and home support services.

Public Health Services maintain and enhance the health and well-being of children, youth and families in areas such as speech and language, nutrition, and dental care in partnership with regional health authorities.

M121

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FAST FACTS FOR 1998/99

- 3,500 CHILDREN RECEIVED SPEECH AND LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY SERVICES
- 57,500 CHILDREN TOOK PART IN THE DENTAL PROGRAM
- 5,000 CHILDREN RECEIVED OPTICAL PROGRAM SERVICES
- 45,000 CHILDREN RECEIVED PREVENTIVE DENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
- PREGNANCY OUTREACH PROGRAMS SERVED 3,000 PERSONS
- 23,000 INFANTS RECEIVED COMPREHENSIVE PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING SERVICES
- 2,000 FAMILIES RECEIVED NOBODY'S PERFECT PARENTING PROGRAM SERVICES

The **Public Health Nursing Program** provides services such as prenatal, pre-school and early school age screening, assessment, education, service coordination and referral services mainly related to growth, development and communicable disease.

Public Health Speech and Language Programs serve pre-school children at risk of, or with identified communication disabilities.

The **Public Health Audiology Program** gives priority to infants and children needing services such as hearing loss identification, assessment, case management, education and rehabilitation.

Public Health Nutrition services include training, support and consultation through activities such as pregnancy outreach programs, kindergarten nutrition screening and school meal programs.

Public Health Dental services include education and screening provided by dental hygienists and dental assistants.

School Based Programs, delivered in partnership with school districts, include:

- the Social Equity Envelope, which provides funding to school districts for school meals, inner city school programs and early academic intervention, to offset the impact of poverty on students
- Community Schools, which provide programs, services, events and opportunities to increase communities' ability to meet needs and provide lifelong learning opportunities
- Healthy Schools, which involve students, the educational community and service providers in creating a shared vision for their schools, and
- the Auditory Training Equipment Program which provides listening devices to students who wear hearing aids.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- For Public Health Services, the ministry has lead responsibility for child, youth and family services and partners with the Ministry of Health, which has lead responsibility for communicable diseases, adult health and population health.
- Developed and implemented an integrated case management training program to help reduce fragmentation of services.
- Continued to build on the province-wide Building Blocks strategy emphasizing promotion, prevention and early support. The 10 initial Building Blocks initiatives expanded to include 27 sites focussing on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/ Effects (FAS/E) prevention, enhanced child care

Thompson/Cariboo	Lay home visiting	100 Mile House, Bella Coola
Central/Upper Island	Enhanced child care	Bowser, Duncan, Lake Cowichan, Shawnigan Lake, Nanaimo, Parksville, Qualicum, Port Alberni
North	FAS, Lay home visiting	Burns Lake, Woyenne, Tachet, Grassy Plains
North	Lay home visiting, FAS	Terrace, Kitimat, Hazelton, Dease Lake, Good Hope Lake
North	Enhanced Child care/ Lay home visiting, FAS	Dawson Creek
Simon Fraser	Lay home visiting	New Westminster
South Fraser	Lay home visiting	Surrey (Whalley, Guildford, Newton, North Delta)
Thompson/Cariboo	Lay home visiting	Kamloops
Central/Upper Island	Lay home visiting, FAS	Port Hardy
Vancouver/Richmond	Lay home visiting	Grandview/Woodlands and Wall Street corridor

and home visiting services for young children (see table above).

- Developed a provincial guide to support prevention of FAS/E.
- Developed public education materials to help reduce the incidence of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, FAS/E and Shaken Baby Syndrome.
- Pilot tested a project to prevent Shaken Baby Syndrome.
- Released a video and learning guide designed to promote resiliency in, and prevent substance abuse by, children aged nine to 13 years.
- Established a vision screening program for three-year olds in four regions, in partnership with the B.C. Association of Optometrists.
- Revised the *Pregnancy Outreach Program Handbook* for use in prenatal outreach programs.
- Developed resources to support healthy infant nutrition, including information on child safety and unpasteurized fruit juices.
- Finalized guidelines for the School Meal Program and published them on the ministry Web site with links to community kitchens, community gardens, food buying clubs and co-ops that continue to improve access to low-cost nutritious food.

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MINISTRY FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES BUILDING BLOCKS SITES IN 1998/99		
REGION	**FOCUS**	**INITIATIVE SITES**
Thompson/Cariboo	Lay home visiting	100 Mile House, Bella Coola
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FUTURE WORK

The branch's future policy work includes continuing to:

- increase child, youth and family capacity and resiliency
- engage communities in planning for and supporting children and families, and
- define a service delivery system that includes identifying risks as early as possible and providing effective, evidence-based support.

CHILD CARE

Guided by the *BC Benefits (Child Care) Act*, this branch assists parents and child care providers across B.C. to address child care needs; improve the quality, affordability and accessibility of child care; stabilize existing child care facilities; and expand child care services and choices.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- Implemented the Compensation Contribution Program to help attract and keep child care staff by supplementing their wages and covering the extra costs associated with infant and toddler care. The program increased the wages of 6,450 child care workers in over 1,076 centres, and supported 37,633 child care spaces.
- Completed and evaluated 12 pilot projects under the *Child Care Strategic Initiative* – a four-year, federal-provincial initiative to test new and innovative approaches to delivering child care services consisting of three parts:
  - Community One Stop Access Centres
  - Regional Delivery Models and Community Demonstration Projects, and
  - Supported Child Care.
- Other highlights are noted in the following charts.

FUTURE WORK

The branch's future work includes:

- sharing the evaluations and resources developed through the four-year federal/provincial Child Care Strategic Initiative (CCSI) which concluded in 1998/99 and tested new, innovative approaches to child care service delivery
- using the learning from CCSI to inform future policy decisions, and
- implementing a new process for referrals for the Child Care Subsidy made under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act* and for the Child Care Surcharge.

MENTAL HEALTH AND YOUTH POLICY

This section is responsible for policies in two key areas: Child and Youth Mental Health and Youth Services. Responsibilities include:

- coordinating development of the ministry's integrated case management policy
- working with the Ministry of Health to develop policy for transition between youth and adult mental health services
- developing policy for specialized services such as crisis response, suicide prevention and sexual abuse intervention, and

Child Care Resource and Referral Program	Parents served	50,509
	Facilities served	5,531
	Communities served	170+
Compensation Contribution Program	Child Care Workers: wages supported	6,450
	Child Care Organizations supported	1,076
	Infant/Toddler spaces supported	2,748
	Child Care spaces supported	37,633
Emergency Repair, Replacement and Relocation Program	Child Care Organizations supported	68
	Child Care spaces supported	Over 1,400
Infant/Toddler Incentive Grant for Family Child Care	Child Care spaces supported	2,270
Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre (caregivers, parents and community members)	Clients served	27,729
Supported Child Care	Children supported	6,100
Child Care Subsidy	Children supported	36,357

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	Infant/Toddler spaces supported	2,748
	Child Care spaces supported	37,633
Emergency Repair, Replacement and Relocation Program	Child Care Organizations supported	68
	Child Care spaces supported	Over 1,400
Infant/Toddler Incentive Grant for Family Child Care	Child Care spaces supported	2,270
Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre (caregivers, parents and community members)	Clients served	27,729
Supported Child Care	Children supported	6,100
Child Care Subsidy	Children supported	36,357

CHILD CARE FACT SHEET PROGRESS IN CHILD CARE 1992 – 1999				
PROGRAM	**1992**	**1999**	**New**	**Per cent Change**
Licensed Child Care Spaces	42,757	68,978	26,221	Up 61%
Subsidy – Children Supported	16,862	36,357	19,495	Up 116%
Compensation Contribution Program (was Wage Supplement Initiative)	0	5,550	5,550	n/a
Child Care Resource and Referral Program	31	34	3	Up 10%
Child Care Resource and Referral Program	31	34	3	Up 10%
Child Care Resource and Referral Program	31	34	3	Up 10%
One Stop Access Centres	0	4	4	Up 400%

- developing policies to support At-Risk Minors Services (ARMS); Reconnect and Outreach and Support Services for Youth; School-Based Support Services, and Parent-Teen Mediation.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- Developed a new plan for serving high-risk youth.
- Coordinated the allocation of $4.8 million for new youth services across the province, including safe housing for sexually exploited youth in Prince George, New Westminster, Victoria, and Kelowna, and 25 additional youth outreach and support workers to help high-risk youth leave the street and/or the sex trade.
- Began youth suicide prevention pilots in seven communities.
- Established Youth Services pilot projects in Vancouver, Richmond, Kelowna, Kamloops, Nanaimo and Prince George to test the integrated and youth-centred approaches that serve as the basis for youth agreements.
- Developed and piloted training models and drafted a user's guide for integrated case management.
- Continued developing a Youth Participation Initiative to involve youth as partners in planning, developing and evaluating MCF and community sponsored youth programs across the province.

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FUTURE WORK

The section's future work includes:

- development of the Youth Policy Framework
- development of the Mental Health Mandate
- provincial implementation of Youth Participation Strategy, and
- provincial implementation of Integrated Case Management.

YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICES

Youth justice programs provide probation and custody services to youth between the ages of 12 and 17 who commit offences. Services provided include:

- alternative measures (diversion from the court system)
- supervision and case management of youth who are subject to a bail or probation order
- preparation of reports for court and Crown Counsel
- community-based residential and non-residential programs, and
- custody of youth awaiting trial or serving a custody sentence.

The *Young Offenders Act (Canada)*, *Young Offenders (British Columbia) Act*, and the *Correction Act* guide youth justice services.

In 1998/99, the province's young offender population included:

- an average of 374 youth in remand, secure and open custody. Of these, 15% were female, 24% were Aboriginal and 75% were 16 years and older.
- an average of 1,486 youth on bail supervision and 3,899 on probation supervision. Of those on probation, 22% were female, 22% were Aboriginal and 78% were aged 16 years and older.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- Deployed the equivalent of 25 new full-time probation officers (25 FTEs), substantially reducing average caseloads.
- Reduced the youth custody population by providing improved multidisciplinary case management and planning, and identifying alternatives to custody. Since youth justice services were transferred to the ministry, the youth custody population has declined by 8%.
- Added 14 bed spaces to the Victoria Youth Custody Centre, substantially relieving overcrowding.
- Established a pilot violent offenders treatment program at the Boulder Bay Youth Custody Centre in Maple Ridge.
- Developed a youth-specific Risk/Needs Assessment instrument for use by probation officers.
- Co-located youth probation officers in multi-disciplinary youth offices, to help ensure that youth involved in the justice system have the supports they need to rebuild their lives.

FUTURE WORK

The section's future work includes:

- consulting with the federal government and planning the proposed new *Youth Criminal Justice Act*
- negotiating a new five-year cost-sharing agreement with the federal government
- developing a youth-specific sex offender risk assessment instrument
- developing core substance abuse management and violence prevention programs in youth custody centres, and
- proceeding with development work for the replacement of the Victoria Youth Custody Centre and planning for the replacement of the Burnaby Youth Custody Centre.

COMMUNITY LIVING SERVICES FOR ADULTS

FAST FACTS FOR 1998/99

- OVER 5,000 ADULTS RECEIVED RESIDENTIAL SERVICES
- 7,800 ADULTS RECEIVED TRAINING AND SUPPORT SERVICES

This section provides a wide range of services to assist people with developmental disabilities to live as fully and independently as possible in the community. Services include residential programs, training and support and professional support.

Residential Programs provide housing that promotes clients' independence while meeting their individual needs. Where possible, placements are arranged in the client's home community. Options include the following:

- **Community residences** vary in size from small family homes to larger residential facilities. All provide care and support, as needed.
- **Semi-independent living** assists clients to live alone or in small groups, with the help of in-home support staff as required.
- **Respite/relief** provides emergency or short-term care to give caregivers periodic relief from their responsibilities.
- **Intensive adult** care provides short-term community-based care for adults with challenging behaviours or unique needs that cannot be met by other respite or temporary care facilities.

Training and Support Programs are offered in four areas:

- **Self-help skills** provide training in personal care, social integration and job readiness.
- **Home support programs** offer direct homemaking or household management services, or provides training in these skill sets.
- **Supported work programs** help individuals find and maintain work experience placements and employment.
- **Professional support services** provide assessment, support, consultation, and planning to individuals or those who support them, to ensure continued success in community placements. They also help service providers, ministry staff and families to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate programs and services related to community living, including training for caregivers.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- Continued to develop policy initiatives, protocols and standards in partnership with the community living sector, in keeping with the ministry's priority to "Renew and Sustain Adult Community Living Services."
- Finalized standards for the Self-Help Skills and Supported Work programs, following extensive work on the part of many stakeholders.
- Celebrated Community Living Month in October 1998, with communities holding events to promote inclusion and to increase awareness of people with developmental disabilities.
- Started receiving input from the newly-established Provincial Community Living Council, regarding policies and programs affecting adults with developmental disabilities, children with special needs and their families.
- Signed a protocol agreement regarding the Review of Deaths of Adults with Developmental Disabilities, based on extensive consultation with the Ministry of Health and the Chief Coroner's Office.
- Provided services to adults with developmental disabilities (some of whom participated in more than one training and support service) as follows:
  - 5,062 received residential services
  - 1,007 received professional support services
  - 5,407 received self-help skills training
  - 256 received home support services, and
  - 1,397 took part in supported work programs.

FUTURE WORK

The branch's future work includes:

- reviewing and refining service delivery principles
- reviewing and rewriting the adult community living policy manual
- implementing a new external monitoring contract
- working with the Health and Labour ministries to resolve shared service issues and to clarify roles and mandates
- reviewing the range of possible funding models for residential care, and
- assisting with planning for the implementation of Adult Guardianship legislation

ADDICTION SERVICES

This branch works to improve the health and well-being of persons affected by alcohol and other drug misuse or problem gambling. A province-wide system of care provides programs, and includes both clinical and preventative services for adults, youth and families.

Clinical services include:

- withdrawal management
- outpatient services
- outreach services
- intensive day/evening/weekend treatment programs
- intensive residential programs
- supportive recovery services for adults, and
- residential stabilization and support services for youth.

Outpatient clinics provide prevention services to both adults and youth. As well, a school-based prevention program for youth operates in 52 secondary schools across British Columbia. Aboriginal people are served through addiction services in 23 Aboriginal organizations, and through two residential treatment facilities that use traditional healing approaches.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- Began planning for the allocation of $4 million to build new alcohol and drug treatment facilities and $600,000 to deliver new programs.
- Coordinated the allocation of $1.3 million in new funding to expand adult addictions programs, including supportive recovery, harm reduction, and interim intensive treatment services for mothers with pre-school age children in the north.
- Developed a framework for a comprehensive addiction prevention strategy for children and families.
- Formed a provincial committee to address the specific addiction treatment needs of youth.
- Consulted with the Vancouver Aboriginal Council to inform strategies for serving Aboriginal youth.
- Provided leadership for Drug Awareness Week in November 1998, with the theme *"Go Your Own Way"*.
- Delivered introductory and advanced skills training to problem gambling counsellors, their supervisors, and other alcohol and drug counsellors.
- Delivered core training in addiction issues to staff in the regions, and to all new child protection workers.
- Released the FAS (Fetal Alcohol Syndrome) Community Action Guide for national and international distribution.
- Continued the accreditation of service providers in partnership with Contract Reform Branch staff.

- Received input from the Addictions Advisory Council, the Provincial Addictions Committee and the Provincial Women's Committee.
- Participated in planning to address concerns in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver.

FUTURE WORK

The branch's future work includes:

- developing, piloting and evaluating a day/evening/weekend program for men
- developing a day/evening/weekend program for youth
- developing youth detox and dual diagnosis residential programs in Prince George, and
- integrating the problem gambling program with the Alcohol and Drug system.

ABORIGINAL RELATIONS

FAST FACTS FOR 1998/99

ABORIGINAL AGENCIES SERVED 126 OF THE PROVINCE'S 197 BANDS AT THE END OF THE FISCAL YEAR

This branch facilitates the ministry's relationships with Aboriginal communities, primarily by negotiating agreements and protocols to guide the delegation of child and family services to Aboriginal child and family service agencies. The branch is also responsible for facilitating and monitoring the implementation of the ministry's Strategic Plan for Aboriginal Services (SPAS).

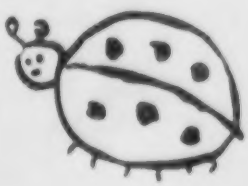
HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- Began implementation of the SPAS, including a review of policy support.
- Concluded delegation agreements with the NIL'TU'O bands on the Saanich Peninsula and with Northwest Inter-Nation Family and Community Services.
- Continued supporting the development of child and family service agencies for one Métis and five urban Aboriginal communities.
- Implemented the Aboriginal Training Initiative as part of an Aboriginal quality assurance process, and to ensure equitable training opportunities.

FUTURE WORK

The branch's future work includes:

- building community capacity in off-reserve, Métis and urban Aboriginal communities and fully engaging Aboriginal communities in supporting the seamless devolution of services, in a way that respects Aboriginal culture and values
- concluding delegation agreements with Ktunaxa-Kinbasket Tribal Council, Heiltsuk Band, Gitxan, Wet'suwet'en, Shuswap and Stl'atl'imx Nations; the Vancouver Aboriginal child and family service Society, Métis Family Services and other Aboriginal communities, and
- continuing the Aboriginal Training Initiative.



Regional Operations Division

REGIONAL OPERATIONS

Regional Operations Division manages the ministry's service delivery system that includes 11 regions, over 400 offices and more than 4,200 staff and contracted partners. Regional Operations is also responsible for the Contract Reform Team.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES

- Developed a new 11-region structure to improve consistency and effectiveness of service delivery.
- Created a more consistent regional management structure, with each region's key management positions including Regional Executive Director, Community Services Manager(s), Regional Child Protection Manager(s), Community Living Manager, and Contract and Resources Manager.
- Established dedicated management positions for the lower mainland, including:
  - an executive director responsible for staffed facilities such as youth custody and the Maples Adolescent Treatment Centre
  - a manager to coordinate and plan particular programs and activities such as the macro-regional alcohol and drug services strategy and cross-regional specialized resources, and
  - a director to oversee the implementation of the Aboriginal Child and Family Service Strategy.
- Adopted a Utilization Management (UM) approach to help ensure positive outcomes for children in care. (UM is a set of management tools that refocus organizations from needs-driven results to results-driven program planning, budgeting and management.)
- Developed demonstration projects in five regions to test the effectiveness of various UM approaches in areas such as family preservation, family finders, adoption and high-risk community intervention to reduce the need for admissions to care. The measures saved a net total of $250,000 for the fiscal year while helping to ensure better outcomes for children in care.
- Supported the regions to review all placement decisions for children in care. Staff reviewed 197 plans of care and developed 105 alternatives with modifications including returning children to their families, placing them with extended family or moving them to resources most appropriate to their level of need.
- Continued to work with the Community Living sector to develop an appropriate UM strategy for Community Living.
- Established an Executive Expenditure Restraint Committee to ensure high-need Community Living clients received timely and appropriate services on a priority basis, while managing fiscal resources more efficiently.
- Supported the regions to establish a process for reviewing new community living service contracts, and for reviewing the eligibility of each new client applying for community living services, based on health and safety concerns.

- Extended the time line for full implementation of Supported Child Care to allow staff and clients in Prince George, Dawson Creek, Surrey, Fort St. John, Abbotsford and Delta to focus attention on the issue of block funding.

FUTURE WORK

The future work of Regional Operations includes:

- placing a greater emphasis on utilization management strategies for children in care to further improve planning
- implementing $9.25 million worth of new alcohol and drug programs
- implementing Youth Agreements
- improving contract management, and
- carrying out major recruitment initiatives to fill staff vacancies around the province.

CONTRACT REFORM TEAM

Contract Reform is a cross-ministry initiative with the community health and social services sector, designed to develop a more efficient approach to contract management. The initiative involves approximately 380 MCF service providers with contracts worth a total of $560 million a year.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

Highlights of the Contract Reform Team's work included:

- Completing the project development phase by:
  - appointing a director
  - establishing the Contract Reform Implementation Team and Contract Management Working Group, and
  - developing a project plan approved by the ministry's Executive Committee.
- Beginning the organizational readiness phase by:
  - starting to develop/deliver a competency-based contract reform training program
  - negotiating Continuing Agreements with 20 service provider development sites
  - developing an outcomes framework
  - defining and developing technical requirements, high level design and prototype for contract management system, and
  - developing contract reform implementation plans with each region.

FUTURE WORK

The future work of the Contract Reform Team includes:

- completing the organizational readiness phase, and
- completing the 20/50 implementation phase, including the accreditation of 20 development sites and negotiating Continuing Agreements with the next 50 service providers.

Regional Expenditures and Full Time Equivalents (FTEs)

FOR THE YEAR ENDING MARCH 31, 1999

Region	Expenditure $ Million	Full Time Equivalents
Kootenays	$ 49.206	140
Okanagan	107.630	313
Thompson/Cariboo	76.784	261
Upper Fraser	76.725	248
South Fraser	138.760	329
Simon Fraser/Burnaby	132.680	312
Coast/North Shore	62.829	141
Central/Upper Island	119.922	381
North	125.871	406
Vancouver/Richmond	194.502	450
Lower Mainland Facilities	49.207	674
Capital	123.187	341
	$ 1257.303	3,996

Corporate Policy Division and Chief Information Officer

CORPORATE POLICY

This branch is the central coordinating body for all the ministry's policy and legislative initiatives, including the client complaint process. It coordinates and tracks the development of all ministry submissions to, and recommendations from, outside agencies such as the Children's Commission.

In addition, the branch's Intergovernmental Relations Unit establishes and maintains relationships with all levels of government to ensure the ministry has a voice at all Canadian government tables where children and families are discussed.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- Developed a draft Corporate Policy Framework for the ministry.
- Developed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Children's Commission on access to the Complaints Tracking System.
- Led provincial participation in the National Children's Agenda, a broad multi-sectoral strategy to improve the well-being of children.
- Hosted the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Social Services Senior Managers' Forum in November 1998, where delegates and presenters discussed ways to improve outcomes for Canadian children.
- Jointly managed federal government programs such as the Community Action Program for Children and the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program.
- Provided additional training in administrative fairness to Quality Assurance Managers to support administration of the client complaint process.
- Responded to 332 formal complaints about ministry programs and services, a small number compared to the many thousands of citizens the ministry serves (see following table).

A complaint may be designated as:

- **settled** when the parties have agreed on a resolution
- **unfounded** when the review confirms the decision, action or failure to act on the part of the ministry or ministry staff member
- **founded** when the review confirms the substance of the complaint
- **discontinued** when the complainant cannot be located or contacted
- **withdrawn** when the complainant asks the manager not to pursue the review of the complaint.

FUTURE WORK

The future work of the branch includes:

- reviewing and revising complaints process policy and procedures to better serve clients
- distributing an informational poster and two brochures (one each for youth and adults) explaining how to use the complaints process
- completing the National Children's Agenda negotiations, and
- implementing a new system to allow the ministry to track a variety of agencies' service improvement recommendations.

M121

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MINISTRY FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES FORMAL COMPLAINTS LOGGED BY SERVICE AREA APRIL 1, 1998 – MARCH 31, 1999		
MINISTRY AREA	NUMBER	PERCENT
Adoption	6	1.8%
Alcohol and Drug Services	5	1.5%
Child Care	11	3.4%
Children in Care	81	24.4%
Community Living	35	10.5%
Family Services	109	32.8%
Mental Health	3	0.9%
Special Needs	21	6.3%
Youth Corrections	25	7.5%
Other	36	10.9%
Total	**332**	**100%**

DATA ANALYSIS

This branch manages the ministry's information needs and is responsible for its reporting mechanisms, including data and statistical analysis.

The branch is also responsible for data collection and quality assurance, and for developing strategies to support the ministry's information management needs.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- Assisted in the development and presentation of the ministry's Information Management Plan.
- Continued to provide support for the estimates process.
- Provided support and information to the Canadian Incidence Study, the Child Welfare System in Canada review and other special studies.

FUTURE WORK

The branch's future work includes:

- creating a strategic plan to develop data services
- designing, developing and implementing the ministry's corporate data warehouse, and
- ensuring data quality and utility by developing an information management group within the branch.

INFORMATION AND RECORDS SERVICES

This branch responds to requests for information received under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPP) Act* and the *Child, Family and Community Service (CF&CS) Act.* Typically, these requests are for records containing personal, sensitive information that must be reviewed carefully to ensure compliance with the applicable legislation.

MINISTRY FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES RESOLUTION OF FORMAL COMPLAINTS APRIL 1, 1998 – MARCH 31, 1999		
RESOLUTION OF COMPLAINT	NUMBER	PERCENT
Settled	157	47.4%
Unfounded	93	28.0
Founded	37	11.1
Discontinued	28	8.4
Withdrawn	17	5.1
Total	**332**	**100%**

The branch is also responsible, under the *Document Disposal Act*, for the administration, safekeeping and security of both paper and electronic records in the custody and control of the ministry.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- Processed approximately 1,700 requests for information, including over 500 requests for adoption-related records, and 69 requests for general information. The balance of requests was for personal information.
- Completed 2,341 record searches, including active and passive searches for Adoption Reunion Registry records and other information received from the public and ministry clients.
- Coordinated the transfer of 2,180 boxes of records to contracted off-site storage facilities.
- Retrieved and, when required, reviewed over 8,000 individual files from off-site storage in response to information requests.

FUTURE WORK

The branch's future work includes:

- continuing to improve the response time for processing information requests
- increasing records management efficiencies by reviewing and, where possible, streamlining procedures, and
- investigating opportunities to use new technologies to enhance the branch's services.

LIBRARY/RESOURCE CENTRE

The Library Resource Centre provides reference materials to ministry staff throughout the province; facilitates inter-library loans and resource-sharing with university and other government libraries; and circulates videos to ministry employees and community service providers.

The centre's goal is to provide ministry staff with access to relevant information in all formats – print, audio-visual and electronic – so they can continue to acquire the specialized knowledge needed to carry out their work effectively.

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HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- Continued expansion of the virtual library web site.
- Added over 100 new video titles to the circulating collection.
- Mailed table-of-contents packages to field staff, highlighting new journal articles about child protection, special needs, addictions, and speech and hearing.

FUTURE WORK

The centre's future work includes:

- planning a ministry Intranet, with desktop access to internal ministry information such as orientation, training, and best practices as well as access to external electronic documents and a range of online services.

SYSTEMS SERVICES

This branch provides computer systems and technology strategies and solutions to support corporate and government operational and administrative objectives.

Activities include:

- procuring goods and services
- managing information technology (IT) contracts
- conducting quality assurance reviews
- identifying IT solutions
- coordinating IT training, and
- overseeing application development, data processing, data and system security, end user support, project management, and branch administration for all ministry staff and program areas.

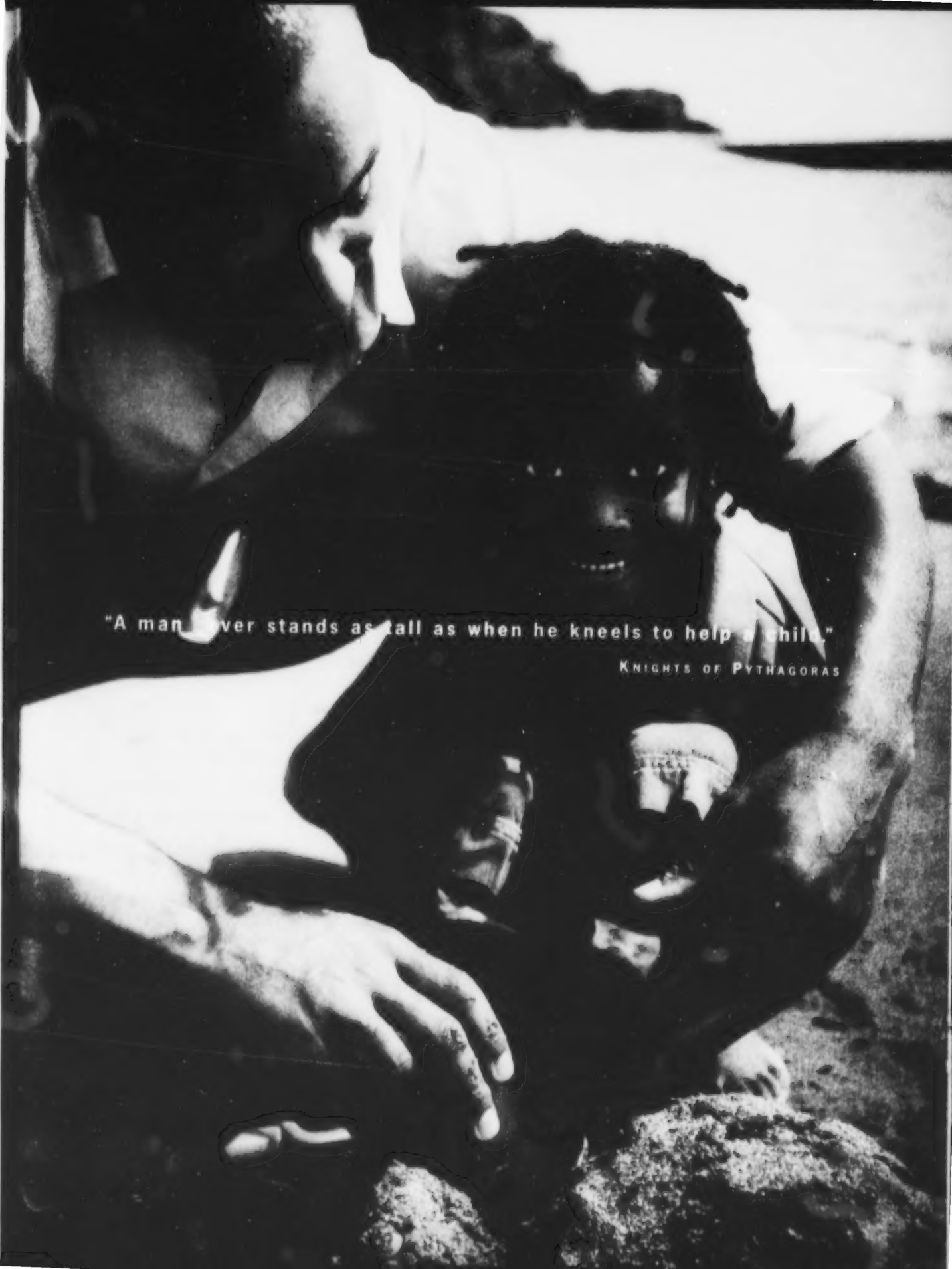
HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- Initiated Year 2000 preparation, as well as upgrades and testing for all mission critical ministry applications.
- Completed negotiations with IBM to outsource application management and desktop support.
- Processed over 5,000 Helpdesk requests per month.
- Processed over 100 MAC (Move/Add/Change) requests every month.
- Completed equipment moves in over 20 offices per month.

FUTURE WORK

The branch's future work includes:

- Ensuring Y2K readiness for ministry electronic systems
- upgrading all ministry computer equipment that is not Y2K compliant
- ensuring a consistent IT structure across all ministry operations
- providing electronic support for integrated case management
- ensuring a comprehensive Internet/Intranet web presence, and
- upgrading infrastructure (PCs and networks) for all headquarters and regional office staff.


"A man never stands as tall as when he kneels to help a child."
KNIGHTS OF PYTHAGORAS

Management Services Division

MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS

This branch is responsible for business continuation planning, emergency preparedness, executive projects, issues management and organizational health. It also administers the employee recognition program and coordinates leadership development, safety, security and risk management initiatives.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- Trained managers and staff designated to operate a headquarters emergency operations centre during a disaster.
- Conducted a successful full-scale test of the ministry's headquarters emergency operations centre, as part of the Thunderbird IV exercise.
- Facilitated the creation of the ministry's regional emergency operations centres through training, consultation, and the provision of models for regional emergency planners.
- Created templates for headquarters and field offices to develop business continuation plans.
- Developed emergency preparedness materials for foster families, Aboriginal communities and contracted service providers.
- Worked with other branches and regional offices to ensure critical ministry programs operate into the new millennium (Y2K).
- Strengthened the Employee Recognition Program by increasing its profile and highlighting employee contributions.

FUTURE WORK

The branch's future work includes:

- assisting in research and publication of the second edition of the *Measuring our Success* document
- developing initiatives to identify management competencies required by ministry directors and strategies to assist them in strengthening or acquiring these skills
- developing a strategy for a ministry-wide organizational health program, and
- developing detailed recommendations on emergency supplies required in every ministry work location to preserve the well-being of staff after an earthquake or other disaster.

FINANCIAL SERVICES

This branch is responsible for all accounting and financial management functions of the ministry, including contract policy, revenue generation and collection, expenditure control, and approval and submission of the ministry's annual budget request. The branch also administers the At Home program, which provides medical equipment, supplies and therapies for children with severe disabilities.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- Reduced processing time for contract and foster home payments so that 98% were made within 30 days.

- Improved the forecasting model for estimating changes in numbers of children in care.
- Developed and delivered contract and financial training to ministry staff.
- Finalized and released a contract management handbook for ministry staff and contracted agencies.
- Consulted with the contracted service sector on improvements to contracts for family care and client service agreements.
- Enhanced delivery of At Home program medical supplies by partnering with the Purchasing Commission.
- Established a Customer Help Desk to improve service to suppliers and staff making queries about client/vendor payments.
- Improved financial reporting and analysis to ensure Executive has accurate and timely information. As a result, the ministry's January financial forecast was within 1% of fiscal year end actuals.

FUTURE WORK

The branch's future work includes:

- improving the business value of branch products and services in terms of cost, service level and customer satisfaction
- improving staffing excellence in terms of core competencies, pertinent training, employee satisfaction, benchmarks and service levels, and
- improving economic forecasting for ministry programs.

PERSONNEL SERVICES

FAST FACTS FOR 1998/99

4,489 REGULAR-STATUS EMPLOYEES WORKED FOR THE MINISTRY

This branch provides a range of services to the ministry's headquarters and regional operations, including staff recruitment and selection; organization, classification and systems; labour relations; occupational safety and health; statistical and management information reports; and human resource planning.

Ministry for Children and Families Personnel Data Summary (as of March 31, 1999)

Of the ministry's 5,014 full- and part-time staff:

- 3,456 worked in field services, including child protection, adult services, adult community living, alcohol and drug services, mental health, and administrative support
- 749 worked in Youth Justice Services including Youth Probation, Youth Corrections, and Youth Forensics
- 315 were in residential programs, and
- 494 worked at headquarters.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- Recruited 269 new child protection workers.
- Implemented a Social Program Officer (SPO) growth series, giving SPOs (such as child protection workers) the opportunity to advance to the full working level in two years, rather than three.
- Reviewed the ministry's regional model to standardize its province-wide operational and organizational structure.
- Ran an Aboriginal-only child protection worker competition.

FUTURE WORK

The branch's future work includes:

- developing a new occupational safety and health program
- filling vacancies in all program areas, and
- providing headquarters and regional personnel staff with training and development to ensure an effective, regional personnel delivery system is maintained.

CAPITAL AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

This branch provides infrastructure services to support regional and headquarters operations. It develops and implements both the ministry's Long Term Capital Plan, which addresses capital needs for institutions and special needs housing, and the ministry's Asset Management Plan.

The branch also provides capital assistance to service providers under the *Human Resource Facility Act (HRFA)*, administers the Facilities and Equipment Grants program for child care agencies, manages and coordinates ministry office accommodations and manages the contract for 218 Provincial Rental Housing Corporation (PRHC) group homes.

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HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- Promoted an improved corporate culture and greater administrative efficiencies by initiating and planning consolidation of headquarters staff from eight buildings into three.
- Provided more than $1 million to non-profit societies to support facility upgrades.
- Recovered more than $334,000 from grants made to non-profit organizations under the HRFA in previous years; funds are reinvested as capital assistance to other ministry service providers.
- Streamlined postal and printing services, saving $450,000.
- Acquired/developed seven group homes – four for children in care and three for adults with developmental disabilities.
- Completed a renovation/expansion project at the Victoria Youth Custody Centre.
- Provided $400,000 to support construction of a new Moms and Kids addiction treatment facility at Peardonville House in Abbotsford.

FUTURE WORK

The branch's future work includes:

- completing the consolidation of headquarters staff into three buildings
- amending the *HRFA* to expand eligibility for assistance to a broader range of service providers and expand the types of assistance available, and
- completing a Capital Asset Management Plan for Treasury Board, demonstrating how the ministry plans to minimize direct government debt and minimize or reduce ongoing capital costs.

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

The Equity and Diversity (E&D) Program manages strategies to create a workforce representative of the people it serves, while ensuring compliance with the *Multiculturalism Act*. It also resolves harassment issues, manages reasonable accommodation requirements for staff with disabilities, and manages the ministry's mentorship program.

Women (senior management)	25.9 %	42.6 %
Women (all)	54.8 %	70.7 %
Visible Minorities	6.4 %	6.6 %
Aboriginal People	2.3 %	2.1%
People with Disabilities	5.2 %	5.9 %

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EMPLOYMENT EQUITY WORKFORCE PROFILE - PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT AND MINISTRY FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES REPRESENTATION

	B.C. GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATION	MCF REPRESENTATION
Women (senior management)	25.9 %	42.6 %
Women (all)	54.8 %	70.7 %
Visible Minorities	6.4 %	6.6 %
Aboriginal People	2.3 %	2.1%
People with Disabilities	5.2 %	5.9 %

FAST FACTS FOR 1998/99

- AN INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE OV INTERNAL E-MAIL FEATURE WAS CREATED SO STAFF COULD QUICKLY CONTACT ANY OF 250 STAFF VOLUNTEERS WHO SPEAK OVER 50 LANGUAGES

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- Created an advisory group of regional representatives to build awareness of multiculturalism.
- Provided training to staff in cultural competency reasonable accommodation issues for people with mental illness.
- Promoted the Public Service Training Program to increase hiring of persons with disabilities.
- Welcomed and provided work experience for clients from the Victoria Native Friendship Centre.

FUTURE WORK

The branch's future work includes:

- continuing work towards creating a culturally competent workforce
- assisting the regions to develop ethnocultural advisory committees, and
- promoting equity hiring through job fairs.

PROGRAM AND MANAGEMENT AUDIT

This branch provides corporate leadership for the ministry's performance management, internal audit, program review and related research functions to help improve the quality of programs and services, and to ensure public accountability.

The branch also oversees the development of action plans in response to audit findings. These are followed up with regular monitoring by the ministry.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- Established an accountability initiative to improve and strengthen the ministry's performance management strategy.
- Completed nine audits and five special investigations.
- Worked with regional management staff and service providers to strengthen monitoring and tracking of audit recommendations.

FUTURE WORK

The branch's future work includes:

- improving accountability for the ministry's programs, services and operations
- fostering a culture which recognizes and applies performance management processes to work practices and decision-making, and
- completing the second edition of *Measuring Our Success: A Framework for Evaluating Population Outcomes (MOS).*

STAFF TRAINING AND EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

The Staff Training and Employee Development Branch identifies, develops and delivers learning opportunities to enhance staff performance throughout the ministry.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- Coordinated training for approximately 3,800 employees (some of whom may have attended more than one training session).
- Trained 20 Aboriginal Awareness instructors to deliver training to approximately 2,200 ministry employees in fiscal 1999/00.
- Piloted the Foster Parent In-Service Training to 59 participants.
- Provided the 15-week Child Protection Worker training program to 328 participants.
- Coordinated 41 sessions of Investigative Interviewing training to 583 child protection workers and supervisors.
- Trained 438 ministry and 41 agency staff in Suicide Intervention.
- Provided training to over 450 Youth Justice workers in areas ranging from first aid to sex offender awareness.
- Established a Provincial Training Committee to identify training needs, establish evaluation frameworks for training activities, and explore alternative approaches for training.

FUTURE WORK

The branch's future work includes:

- improving pre-employment education and training
- moving to a pre-employment model for child welfare workers, consistent with Treasury Board direction
- introducing interdisciplinary and competency-based approaches to training, and
- ensuring equitable access to training resources.

best proof of love is trust.
JOYCE BROTHERS

Deputy Minister's Office

The Deputy Minister's Office directs ministry policy and priorities, and ensures that all ministry activities are carried out effectively, efficiently and in compliance with applicable legislation.

Through the work of a Special Advisor, the Deputy Minister also ensures that consultations with stakeholders, including contracted service providers, are open, timely and progressive.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- Established a Provincial Table to facilitate ongoing consultations between the ministry and the contracted service sector.
- Presented a consultation discussion paper to the Council of Provincial Federations and Organizations for feedback.
  - > Adopted a consultation framework presented by the sector.

COMMUNICATIONS

This branch is responsible for providing information about the ministry and its services to the public, media, clients, staff and stakeholders throughout the province and beyond. It also provides issues management services for the minister's office, executive and the ministry as a whole.

Staff work with program areas to develop strategies to publicize key initiatives and services. This includes producing news releases, speeches, publications, events and public awareness campaigns, and managing the ministry's Web site.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES IN 1998/99

- Coordinated activities for the Foster Family Recognition Month.
- Provided communications counsel and support for the Foster Family Recruitment Campaign and contributed resources to implement a multi-lingual call-back service for BCFFPA recruitment phone lines.
- Contributed resources for Drug Awareness Week.
- Coordinated development of public information materials, including:
  - a community action guide to support the prevention of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
  - brochures and posters supporting foster family recruitment
  - a guide to the Child Care Subsidy for child care providers, and
  - a guide book explaining the rights of children and youth in care.
- Began consulting with representatives of the lower mainland's Chinese community, as part of a commitment to improve communication with, and services to, multi-cultural communities.
- Supported government's overall communications mandate for the Nisga'a Treaty, including the publication and distribution of the ministry's *Strategic Plan for Aboriginal Services.*

FUTURE WORK

The branch's future work includes:

- broadening the scope of its preventative and promotional public awareness initiatives
- promotion and public awareness of the ministry Helpline for Children
- public awareness campaign for Adoption and Health Promotion
- audit and revision of ministry publications
- reorganization of ministry web site
- promotion and public awareness of Alcohol and Drug services, and
- production of staff and stakeholder newsletters.

"While we try to teach our children all about life,
ildren teach us what life is all about."